

S.O.C.S. Business Plan

Sabastien Mohammed, Carlos Ortega, Shaanzay Chaudhry, Omar Touray

Contemporary Issues in the Fashion Industry BUF 4700 Section HD85

New York City College of Technology

13 December 2021

### Abstract

This research paper explores issues within the fashion industry when it comes to the ethical consideration for a creating a business. The business created for this project is called (S.O.C.S.) named after the owners Sabastien, Omar, Carlos and Shaanzay. Topics found in this research paper include ethical consideration during establishment, on the sales floor and in the workplace. In order to alleviate corporate wrongdoings early, it is essential to develop an ethical guideline that is followed from the beginning. Additional information included in this paper is an analysis of our company's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

*Keywords:* Sabastien, Omar, Carlos and Shaanzay, Corporate Social Responsibility

## **Introduction**

S.O.C.S. was created to provide consumers with a source for high quality streetwear garments. The garments we are planning to sell are jackets, hoodies and shirts. We chose to create this company because many of the garments available in this marketplace for sale are plain and have little to no significant meaning. Our company is planning to create a line of cool clever designs that are more common on custom made pieces. An important feature about our clothing is that we are planning to use eco-friendly garments to reduce our carbon footprint.

### **S.O.C.S.'s Mission Statement**

To provide the most innovative high-end streetwear garments possible with careful consideration to the global environmental crisis.

### **How does this benefit the market and who are the competitors?**

Advantages includes the ability to expand upon another market within streetwear fashion and to also provide a unique alternative to the traditional garments that are offered in this marketplace. Consumers would now have a new product offering to choose from within the streetwear market. Some of our competitors include OFF-WHITE, BAPE, Supreme and V-lone, which are high-end streetwear brands.

### **Challenges of Opening a Firm in the Streetwear Industry**

Some of the challenges that we may encounter are to have hard time trying to gain traction in that field. The consumers who purchase products in the streetwear industry are very loyal to the popular brands. Some may argue that a hype-beast mentality makes them decide to buy whatever is hot in the industry. Another problem would be finding our specific target

consumers and to establish a new brand against the other popular companies in this marketplace. Since we are a new company it would be difficult for us to find a manufacture to create our garments.

### **Channels of Distribution and the Selling Environment**

The channel of distribution would be manufacturer to directly to consumer. This way could reduce cost by cutting out the middle man to sell our products. Selling directly to the customer could allow us to reduce waste and to be able to accurately predict how much inventory we have to product. Our company are planning to do business fully online through social media and an online website. Aspects of the online marketplace would be a minimalist header with quick links to the store's most popular products and direct information on manufacturing and eco-friendly procedures

### **Potential Issues with the Channels of Distribution**

Potential misbehavior that could affect our company are consumers who falsify reviews, cyber-attacks, scammers and fraudulent returns. False reviews could hurt our business by telling lies about the quality of garments or about the total time it takes to receive our product. Since we are an online entity, we rely heavily on consumer reviews and word of mouth until that person decides to try our product out. Cyber-attacks are very dangerous in this time because, of the recent attacks on some of the world's toughest security protocols. A cyber-attack could potentially take our business off of the internet for a long period of time, which would significantly harm sales. Fraudulent returns are harmful to our company because items lost in transit and people who use and return our garments could affect the quantity of merchandise available.

### **Consumer Interaction on the Sales Floor**

For our business is online, we would have a non-invasive welcome banner with a discount for those consumers who join our mailing list. In that banner would be access to our most popular merchandise. Follow up procedures after the sale include sending a thank you email with confirmation and to sending tracking information in a timely manner. It is important to send a notification to let the consumer know that they are important and that we are working on their order. Our online sales associate would receive training to communicate in a non-evasive way to help the consumer with their questions. Returns would be simplified for the consumer and could be found on their order email or online account.

### **How Do Our Policies Reflect Our Company?**

SOCS' Company Policy is focused on striving for 100% consumer satisfaction. Each one of the policies reflects the importance of our customers. Its idea to provide sustainable fashion garments while protecting the uniqueness and integrity is paramount to our mission. This inspiration came from this generation fighting against global warming, accepting self-acceptance and not tolerating discrimination. We stand behind our customer in efforts to protect their intellectual data.

### **Mission Statement, Core Values and Code of Ethics**

Our mission statement is to provide the most innovative high-end streetwear garments possible with careful consideration to the global environmental crisis. Our company's core values are integrity, innovation and consistency. Integrity is reflected with the policies by doing what is right by our customers and by the environment. Innovation proves that we are consistently working to provide unique garments and to provide a better product purchasing

experience. Our sales associate would have periodic training to resolve any sales issues. Consistency ensures that there would always be an improving purchasing experience. Our code of ethics is to conduct our business in the most professional manner and to be vigilant for any type of misconduct.

### **Potential Conflicts**

Some of the potential conflicts that could happen to our products could be other brands trying to copy our designs or our marketing technique in order to steal market share from us. Popular products are prone to counterfeits because of the lack of supply that occurs when they are not enough of an item. Another company may try to copy a design to find a way to seize market share away from us. To alleviate that issue, we would work closely with a copyrighter to protect our interest. Since we are an online company, any type of cyber attack may be detrimental to our business. In the future, we would re-evaluate our popularity to see if it would be profitable to open pop-up locations.

### **Conclusion**

S.O.C.S. is dedicated to providing the most innovative high-end streetwear products possible to our consumers. In order to do we need to provide a safe sales experience for our consumers and employees. We have conducted many hours of research trying to find ways to create this company in the most ethical way possible. When it comes to the development of our products, we will strive to create them in regards to our core values of integrity, innovation and consistency. By creating a business in regards to ethical considerations, it will help us to provide the best product possible.

## **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**

### **Introduction**

My name is Sabastien Mohammed. I am one of the four major owners at S.O.C.S. S.O.C.S., is an acronym of the owner's names, which are Sabastien, Omar, Carlos and Shaanzay. We are a new fashion house created toward eco-friendly streetwear clothing. Our company's mission strives to provide the best experience possible. Whether it is with the garments or with the sales experience, we want our customers to feel like they are part of our family. By providing a high-quality experience in addition to the garment, we could ensure our clients are getting the best deal.

### **S.O.C.S.'s Mission and Vision Statement**

The human impact is one of strongest driving factors to why we are who we are. We started this company in an effort to provide a service in a market that were lacking the eco-conscious touch. The streetwear fashion industry has one of the fastest fast-fashion trends and littlest time before becoming obsolesce. This being said, there were a lot of clothes that are produced cheaply in inhumane conditions, in order to turn a profit. Our Mission Statement is to provide the highest quality streetwear garment by using only eco-friendly techniques.

### **S.O.C.S. Company Goals**

Our goal currently for 2021 is to get fully established ensuring that we are following proper procedures and guidelines, in an effort to prevent ethical dilemmas. The pandemic has been equally as rough to us, opening in a time of financial difficulties but there is a light to the tunnel.

We project to be fully operational by Spring 2022 with an adequate amount of stock to generate a revenue and provide funding for the following season. A current major goal we have is to search out physical store locations to host pop-ups events during the major shopping seasons. As we are an online-only company. This would help us to minimize cost for a store-front and to provide our loyal consumers a chance for a unique and exciting experience.

### **CSR Strategy**

Integrity and Responsibility are two of the core values that we strive our business on order to prevent any type of ethical dilemma that may hurt our company's growth. We believe in order to have a proper company; you need to start responsible at the source. Our employees are trained to be socially responsible and to promote a safe environment to bring up any issue that may be going on. In addition to that, we run a technical training session every couple of months for a safe space to identify issues right at the source. Also, to provide proper training and to alleviate any issues that are common. Benefits include promoting a safe work and shopping environment and to have nothing to worry about. If you are doing the right thing, at all times there should be nothing to worry about.

### **CSR in relation to our overall purpose**

In order to be eco-conscious, we must provide an ethically responsible working environment. This is because, you need people to have a sense of pride and urgency to do what is right when the answer is not so clear. If we do not host seminars and training event, then we are liable for however our employees look to the outside world because they are our facilitators. The conduct business and represent us to the American public. Corporate Social Responsibility is used a checks-and-balances tool to ensure that we are doing the right thing.



### **Policies set for our employees and benefits**

Some of the policies that are important to us and a current fashion issue are equality in the workplace, harassment identification and prevention and to provide a safe work environment. Equality is a major issue that we notice within the working industry, where there are women who unfairly receiving less wages than their male-counterpart. We are re-structuring our company to ensure that every person is to be treated with dignity and respect no matter the circumstances. Harassment is a major issue in the workplace, many people are able to identify it but remediation is not always simple. We want everyone to be comfortable, so we establish many classes where our employees could speak freely about an issue and that we would investigate. A safe work environment is also another important in the fashion industry. We all know about sweatshop located overseas, in order to lower the cost of production. That type of thing makes us very angry and our policies are if you see something that does not look right, you need to say something. If you notice something and refuse to say something, you are adding to the issue. We at S.O.C.S. strive to promote the best conditions possible because if everyone is happy, we all win.

**Module 1**

# ETHICS in the Fashion Industry

Module 1  
Establishing the Company

ACTIVITIES

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Name(s): Sabastien, Shaanzay, Omar and Carlos  
 Date: 10/08/2021  
 Course: BUF 4700 – HD85

**Complete the form below to provide an overview of your company:**

Describe the purpose of your company.	The purpose of our company to provide consumers with a source for high quality streetwear garments.
What products will you sell?	We are planning to sell jackets, hoodies and shirts.
What is the name of your company?	Our company will be named SOCS because of the initials from our first names.

As a group, answer the following questions:

What is missing in the current marketplace that you can address with your company’s offerings?
In this marketplace, many of the garments available for sale are plain and have little to no significant meaning. Our company is planning to create a line of cool clever designs that are more common on custom made pieces. An example of a jacket design is a dyed black jean jacket with “Wear in case of a revolution”, stitched on the back. An important line of clothing that we are proposing is to create a campaign that would raise awareness for the

people who are suffering worldwide. Another important offering is that we are planning to use eco-friendly garments to reduce our carbon footprint.

What are the advantages to developing the company that you have envisioned?

Advantages includes the ability to expand upon another market within streetwear fashion and to also provide a unique alternative to the traditional garments that are offered in this marketplace.

Are you creating a market for a new product or are you looking to enter an existing market where you will compete for shares of the market with established companies?

We are looking to enter an existing market. Our competitors include OFF-WHITE, BAPE, Supreme and Vlone.

What are the challenges for your company with respect to entering the marketplace?

Some of the challenges that we may encounter are to have hard time trying to gain traction in that field, finding our specific target consumers and to establish a new brand against the other popular companies in this marketplace. Another challenge would be to find a manufacture to create our garments.

What will be the channels of distribution for your product or services?

The channel of distribution would be manufacturer to directly to consumer. We would sell our merchandise via social media marketplaces (Instagram and Facebook) and have an online website (Shopify Site).

## Module 2

# ETHICS in the Fashion Industry

## Module 2

### Ethical Consumer Decisions

#### ACTIVITIES

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Name: Sabastien, Carlos, Omar and Shaanzay

Date: 10/29/2021

Course: BUF 4700 – HD85

As a group, collect and discuss a variety of customer service policies from retailers and wholesalers. Using those, discuss the type of environment you wish to create for your customers.

**Describe the type of environment you wish to create for your customers. Identify (in the space below) specific tangible and non-tangible elements of the store environment. Include exterior and interior spaces as well as methods in which merchandise will be displayed.**

Our company are planning to do business fully online through social media and an online website. We plan to make the website as simple as possible so people could be able to purchase products seamlessly. Aspects of the online marketplace would be a minimalist header with quick links to the store's most popular products and direct information on manufacturing and eco-friendly procedures. Right now, we are only planning to run our own advertisements on the website, instead of having a paid sponsor. There would be a chat option, so if there are any questions our online associates could answer them in a timely manner.

Discuss the potential misbehavior that may affect the well-being of your company. In the space below, list potential customer misbehavior and articulate your policies for addressing these (i.e., shoplifting, fraudulent returns).

Potential misbehavior that could affect our company are consumers who falsify reviews, cyber-attacks, scammers and fraudulent returns. False reviews could hurt our business by telling lies about the quality of garments or about the total time it takes to receive our product. Since we are an online entity, we rely heavily on consumer reviews and word of mouth until that person decides to try our product out. Cyber-attacks are very dangerous in this time because, of the recent attacks on some of the world's toughest security protocols. A cyber-attack could potentially take our business off of the internet for a long period of time, which would significantly harm sales. Fraudulent returns are harmful to our company because items lost in transit and people who use and return our garments could affect the quantity of merchandise available.

### **Develop a Return Policy**

Define the customer interaction strategies for your organization, including:

<b>Greeting customers in the store</b>	Since our business is online, we could have a non-invasive welcome banner with a discount for those consumers who join our mailing list. In that banner would be access to our most popular merchandise.
<b>Follow-up after the sale</b>	Follow up procedures after the sale include sending a thank you email with confirmation, sending tracking information in a timely manner, opportunities for sales discounts and access to our brand ambassador program. Sending a thank you email would show the consumer our gratitude with detailed information about their purchase. Tracking information email would help to generate excitement for the customer to receive our product. Our brand ambassador program could incentivize the top-spending consumers to have early access to our new products in exchange for social media promotions.
<b>Sales associate training</b>	Our sales associates would be well-trained in communicating over our built-in chat box on our store's website. This would ensure that each consumer receives the proper attention to make informed decisions about our products. We would also provide periodic training on human behaviors and customer service training. Giving the employees an opportunity to discuss customers complaints, finding ways to improve customer service.
<b>Return policy</b>	The return policy would be easily assessable on our website and on our order confirmation email. The policy would be revised for easy-to-understand text to clear up any confusion. Since we are an online website, the policy would be 15 days after receipt of item for garments that we're tried on and 30 days for not worn garments. Consumers could choose between a store credit or a full refund for qualifying returns.

After completing the activities above, answer the review questions below.

Explain the rationale for the store policies you implement. How does each policy reflect your company mission?

Our policies exist to provide a safe environment for our employees and consumers. Our top priority is to provide our consumers with the highest quality eco-friendly garments possible. In order for us to do that we need a set of proper procedures to increase revenue and to prevent potential misbehaviors that affect our financials.

Why are the policies you have stated the best choices for your company?

SOCS' Company Policy is focused on striving for 100% consumer satisfaction. Each one of the policies reflects the importance of our customers. Its idea to provide sustainable fashion garments while protecting the uniqueness and integrity is paramount to our mission. This inspiration came from this generation fighting against global warming, accepting self-acceptance and not tolerating discrimination. We stand behind our customer in efforts to protect their intellectual data.

How are your company's core values reflected in the policies?

Our company's core values are integrity, innovation and consistency. Integrity is reflected with the policies by doing what is right by our customers and by the environment. Innovation proves that we are consistently working to provide unique garments and to provide a better product purchasing experience. Our sales associate would have periodic training to resolve any sales issues. Consistency ensures that there would always be an improving purchasing experience.

Are your store policies consistent with common industry practices, or have you introduced a new, unique policy strategy? Explain.

Our policies are consistent with common industry practices however, many firms do not hold themselves accountable to these practices. Our company will strive to be as transparent as possible to prevent any unethical misconduct.

What complications do you foresee with respect to the policies you have established?

Some of the complications that we foresee is the higher cost that it takes to produce eco-friendly garments. If we enter a period of low sales this could negatively affect our ability to be in business. Periodic consumer training could become repetitive after a while; we would need to find ways to switch it up.

How will you assess the effectiveness of implementation of your customer interaction strategies?

Ways we would assess the effectiveness of our customer interaction strategies would be seen within the reviews, sales revenue and by surveys. Reviews could help to see which areas that we that we lack in. Consumer reviews are usually unbiased ways that we could find out first-hand on what is wrong with our products or sales methods. Our sales revenue would tell us which products do well and which do not. Lastly, surveys would be an assessment for feedback on what the customers liked and disliked from our sales platform.

How will your customers be able to access your code of ethics?

Consumers will be able to access our company data on our website. Here customers would be able to find information on code of ethics, core values, our mission statement and policies. If they have any questions, they could speak to a live agent on our site's messaging interface.



How do your customer policies reflect your core values and mission statement?

Our customer policy reflects our core value and mission because, we strive to provide the best experience possible. Whether it is with the garments or with the sales experience, we want our customers to feel like they are part of our family. Our core values exist to signify some of the most important company beliefs tied in with our overall mission.

### Module 3

# ETHICS in the Fashion Industry

## Module 3: Writing the Company Mission Statement

### ACTIVITIES

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Name: Sabastien, Omar, Carlos and Shaanzay

Date: 10/29/2021

Course: BUF 4700 – HD85

Write your own company mission statement and complete the review questions.

Write your own company mission statement in the space below.

To provide the most innovative high-end streetwear garments possible with careful consideration to the global environmental crisis.

1. Explain why you selected the elements that make up your mission statement.

We selected these elements because we feel that there is a void between unique streetwear garments and the use of eco-friendly garments. Our company's design department plans to give our garments a cool and clever feel through the use of design and technology. The fashion industry is one of the leading causes of our ongoing environment crises. Our company wants to lead by example to help reduce our carbon footprint but inspire consumers to hold other fashion firms accountable for non-ecofriendly garments.

2. How does your mission statement reflect your company's core values?

Our mission statement reflects our core values (integrity, innovation and consistency) because these are the most important beliefs of our company. Integrity serves to do what is right at all times and to hold everyone accountable. This is important especially when it comes to providing eco-friendly garments. Innovation is the driving force to keep moving with new technological advances. Lastly, consistency is ensuring that we are doing everything possible to keep our consumers happy while reducing our carbon footprint.

## Module 4

# ETHICS in the Fashion Industry

## Module 4: Writing a Code of Ethics

## Management, Supervision, and Workplace Issues

ACTIVITIES

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Name: Sabastien, Carlos, Omar and Shaanzay

Date: 11/19/2021

Course: BUF 4700

**Below, list the areas that should be addressed in your company's code of conduct/ethics:**

Some of the areas that should be addressed in our code of conduct/ethics are ecological consideration, prevent workplace harassment and to promote work place safety.

**Review your Mission Statement and identify the core values that should be addressed in your code of conduct/ethics**

Our mission statement is to provide the most innovative high-end streetwear garments possible with careful consideration to the global environmental crisis and our core values are integrity, innovation and consistency. How this ties into our statement and core values is that it ensures that we are usually eco-friendly garments while not sacrificing the humane side of garment creation.

**Write a company code of conduct/ethics in the space below.**

Our company's code of conduct are that discrimination and sexual harassment will not be

tolerated, we would always strive to use sustainable materials and to treat everyone with respect.

**Review your code of conduct and explain how it reflects your mission statement. (If it does not reflect your mission statement, do another draft, and then explain how the two are related.)**

Our code of ethics goes back to our mission because we are a company that focuses on having healthy relationships with our clients and employees.

## Module 5

# ETHICS in the Fashion Industry

## Module 5

### Processes and Pitfalls in Fashion Design and Product Development

#### ACTIVITIES

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Name: Sabastien, Carlos, Shaanzay, Omar

Date: 11/19/2021

Course: BUF 4700

Discuss as a group the products your company will offer and complete the following:

List the potential conflicts that may arise related to the products you offer (i.e., copyright infringement, safety issues, regulatory issues).

Some of the potential conflicts that could happen to our products could be other brands trying to copy our designs or our marketing technique in order to steal market share from us.

Discuss as a group how your design and development team interact with company management, the sales force, and your retail outlets.

Describe, as specifically as possible, your products you will sell. Also, describe how your product/service will be renewed over time (i.e., How will you maintain market share?).

The products that we plan to sell are jackets, hoodies and shirts inspired by streetwear design. Our designs would be consistent of what is popular at the time. We would maintain market share by having a set of expert fashion forecasters to identify future trends.

What (if any) uncompromising principles will you apply to design and development?

Some of the principles that we would add to design and development would be to create a way for consumers and enthusiasts to verify that they have a legitimate garment from us. There are a large amount of fake merchandise and knock-offs circulating, making people skeptical to make purchases. If we could create a good authentication method that is not easily copied this would help our product development.

After completing the activities above, answer the review questions below.

**Describe how the development of your products reflects your core values and mission statement.**

The development of our products reflects our core values which are integrity, innovation and consistency. Integrity ensures that we are doing what is right regardless of a cheaper alternative could generate more revenue. Innovation and consistency go hand-in-hand to make sure that we are taking the initiative to create and distribute the latest fashions before our competitors.

**How will you prevent or resolve ethical issues related to design and development?**

We would prevent ethical issues by following close guidance to what our company is founded upon. We strive to provide the latest trendy fashions while paying attention to eco-consciousness. We would host frequent training days to identify and resolve any issues that we may be experiencing.